

§543.17 What are the minimum internal control standards for drop and count?

(a) *Supervision.* Supervision must be provided for drop and count as needed by an agent(s) with authority equal to or greater than those being supervised.

(b) *Count room access.* Controls must be established and procedures implemented to limit physical access to the count room to count team agents, designated staff, and other authorized persons. Such controls must include the following:

(1) Count team agents may not exit or enter the count room during the count except for emergencies or scheduled breaks.

(2) Surveillance must be notified whenever count room agents exit or enter the count room during the count.

(3) The count team policy, at a minimum, must address the transportation of extraneous items such as personal belongings, tool boxes, beverage containers, etc., into or out of the count room.

(c) *Count team.* Controls must be established and procedures implemented to ensure security of the count and the count room to prevent unauthorized access, misappropriation of funds, forgery, theft, or fraud. Such controls must include the following:

(1) For Tier A and B operations, all counts must be performed by at least two agents. For Tier C operations, all counts must be performed by at least three agents.

(2) For Tier A and B operations, at no time during the count can there be fewer than two count team agents in the count room until the drop proceeds have been accepted into cage/vault accountability. For Tier C operations, at no time during the count can there be fewer than three count team agents in the count room until the drop proceeds have been accepted into cage/vault accountability.

(3) For Tier A and B operations, count team agents must be rotated on a routine basis such that the count team is not consistently the same two agents more than four days per week. This standard does not apply to gaming operations that utilize a count team of more than two agents. For Tier C operations, count team agents must be rotated on a routine basis such that the count team is not consistently the same three agents more than four days per week. This standard does not apply to gaming operations that utilize a count team of more than three agents.

(4) Functions performed by count team agents must be rotated on a routine basis.

(5) Count team agents must be independent of the department being counted. A cage/vault agent may be used if they are not the sole recorder of the count and do not participate in the transfer of drop proceeds to the cage/vault. An accounting agent may be used if there is an independent audit of all count documentation.

(d) *Card game drop standards.* Controls must be established and procedures implemented to ensure security of the drop process. Such controls must include the following:

(1) Surveillance must be notified when the drop is to begin so that surveillance may monitor the activities.

(2) At least two agents must be involved in the removal of the drop box, at least one of whom is independent of the card games department.

(4) Once the drop is started, it must continue until finished.

(5) All drop boxes may be removed only at the time previously designated by the gaming operation and reported to the TGRA. If an emergency drop is required, surveillance must be notified before the drop is conducted and the TGRA must be informed within a timeframe approved by the TGRA.

(6) At the end of each shift:

(i) All locked card game drop boxes must be removed from the tables by an agent independent of the card game shift being dropped;

(ii) For any tables opened during the shift, a separate drop box must be placed on each table, or a gaming operation may utilize a single drop box with separate openings and compartments for each shift; and

(iii) Card game drop boxes must be transported directly to the count room or other equivalently secure area by a minimum of two agents, at least one of whom is independent of the card game shift being dropped, until the count takes place.

(7) All tables that were not open during a shift and therefore not part of the drop must be documented.

(8) All card game drop boxes must be posted with a number corresponding to a permanent number on the gaming table and marked to indicate game, table number, and shift, if applicable.

(e) *Player interface and financial instrument storage component drop standards.* (1) Surveillance must be notified when the drop is to begin so that surveillance may monitor the activities.

(2) At least two agents must be involved in the removal of the player interface storage component drop, at least one of whom is independent of the player interface department.

(3) All financial instrument storage components may be removed only at the time previously designated by the gaming operation and reported to the TGRA. If an emergency drop is required, surveillance must be notified before the drop is conducted and the TGRA must be informed within a timeframe approved by the TGRA.

(4) The financial instrument storage components must be removed by an agent independent of the player interface department, then transported directly to the count room or other equivalently secure area with comparable controls and locked in a secure manner until the count takes place.

(i) Security must be provided for the financial instrument storage components removed from player interfaces and awaiting transport to the count room.

(ii) Transportation of financial instrument storage components must be performed by a minimum of two agents, at least one of whom is independent of the player interface department.

(5) All financial instrument storage components must be posted with a number corresponding to a permanent number on the player interface.

(f) *Card game count standards.* (1) Access to stored, full card game drop boxes must be restricted to:

(i) Authorized members of the drop and count teams; and

(ii) In an emergency, authorized persons for the resolution of a problem.

(2) The card game count must be performed in a count room or other equivalently secure area with comparable controls.

(3) Access to the count room during the count must be restricted to members of the drop and count teams, with the exception of authorized observers, supervisors for resolution of problems, and authorized maintenance personnel.

(4) If counts from various revenue centers occur simultaneously in the count room, procedures must be in effect to prevent the commingling of funds from different revenue centers.

(5) Count equipment and systems must be tested, with the results documented, at minimum before the first count begins to ensure the accuracy of the equipment.

(6) The card game drop boxes must be individually emptied and counted so as to prevent the commingling of funds between boxes until the count of the box has been recorded.

(i) The count of each box must be recorded in ink or other permanent form of recordation.

(ii) For counts that do not utilize a currency counter, a second count must be performed by a member of the count team who did not perform the initial count. Separate counts of chips and tokens must always be performed by members of the count team.

(iii) Coupons or other promotional items not included in gross revenue must be recorded on a supplemental document by either the count team members or accounting personnel. All single-use coupons must be cancelled daily by an authorized agent to prevent improper recirculation.

(iv) If a currency counter interface is used:

(A) It must be restricted to prevent unauthorized access; and

(B) The currency drop figures must be transferred via direct communications line or computer storage media to the accounting department.

(7) If currency counters are utilized, a count team member must observe the loading and unloading of all currency at the currency counter, including rejected currency.

(8) Two counts of the currency rejected by the currency counter must be recorded per table, as well as in total. Posting rejected currency to a nonexistent table is prohibited.

(9) Card game drop boxes, when empty, must be shown to another member of the count team, to another agent observing the count, or to surveillance, provided that the count is monitored in its entirety by an agent independent of the count.

(10) Procedures must be implemented to ensure that any corrections to the count documentation are permanent and identifiable, and that the original, corrected information remains legible. Corrections must be verified by two count team agents.

(11) The count sheet must be reconciled to the total drop by a count team member who may not function as the sole recorder, and variances must be reconciled and documented.

(12) All count team agents must sign the count sheet attesting to their participation in the count.

(13) A final verification of the total drop proceeds, before transfer to cage/vault, must be performed by at least two agents, one of whom is a supervisory count team member, and one a count team agent.

(i) Final verification must include a comparison of currency counted totals against the currency counter/system report, if any counter/system is used.

(ii) Any unresolved variances must be documented, and the documentation must remain part of the final count record forwarded to accounting.

(iii) This verification does not require a complete recount of the drop proceeds, but does require a review sufficient to verify the total drop proceeds being transferred.

(iv) The two agents must sign the report attesting to the accuracy of the total drop proceeds verified.

(v) All drop proceeds and cash equivalents that were counted must be submitted to the cage or vault agent (who must be independent of the count team), or to an agent independent of the revenue generation source and the count process, for verification. The agent must certify, by

signature, the amount of the drop proceeds delivered and received. Any unresolved variances must be reconciled, documented, and/or investigated by accounting/revenue audit.

(14) After verification by the agent receiving the funds, the drop proceeds must be transferred to the cage/vault.

(i) The count documentation and records must not be transferred to the cage/vault with the drop proceeds.

(ii) The cage/vault agent must have no knowledge or record of the drop proceeds total before it is verified.

(iii) All count records must be forwarded to accounting or secured and accessible only by accounting agents.

(iv) The cage/vault agent receiving the transferred drop proceeds must sign the count sheet attesting to the verification of the total received, and thereby assume accountability of the drop proceeds, ending the count.

(v) Any unresolved variances between total drop proceeds recorded on the count sheet and the cage/vault final verification during transfer must be documented and investigated.

(15) The count sheet, with all supporting documents, must be delivered to the accounting department by a count team member or an agent independent of the cage/vault. Alternatively, it may be secured so that it is only accessible to accounting agents.

(g) *Player interface financial instrument count standards.* (1) Access to stored full financial instrument storage components must be restricted to:

(i) Authorized members of the drop and count teams; and

(ii) In an emergency, authorized persons for the resolution of a problem.

(2) The player interface financial instrument count must be performed in a count room or other equivalently secure area with comparable controls.

(3) Access to the count room during the count must be restricted to members of the drop and count teams, with the exception of authorized observers, supervisors for resolution of problems, and authorized maintenance personnel.

(4) If counts from various revenue centers occur simultaneously in the count room, procedures must be in effect that prevent the commingling of funds from different revenue centers.

(5) The count team must not have access to amount-in or bill-in meter amounts until after the count is completed and the drop proceeds are accepted into the cage/vault accountability.

(6) Count equipment and systems must be tested, and the results documented, before the first count begins, to ensure the accuracy of the equipment.

(7) If a currency counter interface is used:

(i) It must be adequately restricted to prevent unauthorized access; and

(ii) The currency drop figures must be transferred via direct communications line or computer storage media to the accounting department.

(8) The financial instrument storage components must be individually emptied and counted so as to prevent the commingling of funds between storage components until the count of the storage component has been recorded.

(i) The count of each storage component must be recorded in ink or other permanent form of recordation.

(ii) Coupons or other promotional items not included in gross revenue may be recorded on a supplemental document by the count team members or accounting personnel. All single-use coupons must be cancelled daily by an authorized agent to prevent improper recirculation.

(9) If currency counters are utilized, a count team member must observe the loading and unloading of all currency at the currency counter, including rejected currency.

(10) Two counts of the currency rejected by the currency counter must be recorded per interface terminal as well as in total. Rejected currency must be posted to the player interface from which it was collected.

(11) Storage components, when empty, must be shown to another member of the count team, to another agent who is observing the count, or to surveillance, provided that the count is monitored in its entirety by an agent independent of the count.

(12) Procedures must be implemented to ensure that any corrections to the count documentation are permanent, identifiable and the original, corrected information remains legible. Corrections must be verified by two count team agents.

(13) The count sheet must be reconciled to the total drop by a count team member who may not function as the sole recorder, and variances must be reconciled and documented. This standard does not apply to vouchers removed from the financial instrument storage components.

(14) All count team agents must sign the report attesting to their participation in the count.

(15) A final verification of the total drop proceeds, before transfer to cage/vault, must be performed by the at least two agents, one of whom is a supervisory count team member and the other a count team agent.

- (i) Final verification must include a comparison of currency counted totals against the currency counter/system report, if a counter/system is used.
 - (ii) Any unresolved variances must be documented and the documentation must remain a part of the final count record forwarded to accounting.
 - (iii) This verification does not require a complete recount of the drop proceeds but does require a review sufficient to verify the total drop proceeds being transferred.
 - (iv) The two agents must sign the report attesting to the accuracy of the total drop proceeds verified.
 - (v) All drop proceeds and cash equivalents that were counted must be turned over to the cage or vault cashier (who must be independent of the count team) or to an agent independent of the revenue generation and the count process for verification. Such cashier or agent must certify, by signature, the amount of the drop proceeds delivered and received. Any unresolved variances must be reconciled, documented, and/or investigated by accounting/revenue audit.
- (16) After certification by the agent receiving the funds, the drop proceeds must be transferred to the cage/vault.
- (i) The count documentation and records must not be transferred to the cage/vault with the drop proceeds.
 - (ii) The cage/vault agent must not have knowledge or record of the drop proceeds total before it is verified.
 - (iii) All count records must be forwarded to accounting secured and accessible only by accounting agents.
 - (iv) The cage/vault agent receiving the transferred drop proceeds must sign the count sheet attesting to the verification of the total received, and thereby assuming accountability of the drop proceeds, and ending the count.
 - (v) Any unresolved variances between total drop proceeds recorded on the count room report and the cage/vault final verification during transfer must be documented and investigated.
- (17) The count sheet, with all supporting documents, must be delivered to the accounting department by a count team member or agent independent of the cashiers department. Alternatively, it may be adequately secured and accessible only by accounting department.
- (h) *Collecting currency cassettes and financial instrument storage components from kiosks.* Controls must be established and procedures implemented to ensure that currency cassettes and financial instrument storage components are securely removed from kiosks. Such controls must include the following:

- (1) Surveillance must be notified prior to the financial instrument storage components or currency cassettes being accessed in a kiosk.
 - (2) At least two agents must be involved in the collection of currency cassettes and/or financial instrument storage components from kiosks and at least one agent should be independent of kiosk accountability.
 - (3) Currency cassettes and financial instrument storage components must be secured in a manner that restricts access to only authorized agents.
 - (4) Redeemed vouchers and pulltabs (if applicable) collected from the kiosk must be secured and delivered to the appropriate department (cage or accounting) for reconciliation.
 - (5) Controls must be established and procedures implemented to ensure that currency cassettes contain the correct denominations and have been properly installed.
- (i) *Kiosk count standards.* (1) Access to stored full kiosk financial instrument storage components and currency cassettes must be restricted to:
- (i) Authorized agents; and
 - (ii) In an emergency, authorized persons for the resolution of a problem.
- (2) The kiosk count must be performed in a secure area, such as the cage or count room.
 - (3) If counts from various revenue centers and kiosks occur simultaneously in the count room, procedures must be in effect that prevent the commingling of funds from the kiosks with any revenue centers.
 - (4) The kiosk financial instrument storage components and currency cassettes must be individually emptied and counted so as to prevent the commingling of funds between kiosks until the count of the kiosk contents has been recorded.
- (i) The count of must be recorded in ink or other permanent form of recordation.
- (ii) Coupons or other promotional items not included in gross revenue (if any) may be recorded on a supplemental document. All single-use coupons must be cancelled daily by an authorized agent to prevent improper recirculation.
- (5) Procedures must be implemented to ensure that any corrections to the count documentation are permanent, identifiable, and the original, corrected information remains legible. Corrections must be verified by two agents.
- (j) *Controlled keys.* Controls must be established and procedures implemented to safeguard the use, access, and security of keys for kiosks.

(k) *Variances*. The operation must establish, as approved by the TGRA, the threshold level at which a variance must be reviewed to determine the cause. Any such review must be documented.

[77 FR 58712, Sept. 21, 2012, as amended at 78 FR 63874, Oct. 25, 2013]